

### 131-3 The Lesser of Two Evils

In 2003, I watched the movie, “Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World.” The plot was simple but intriguing. During the Napoleonic Wars, a brash British captain pushed his ship, The HMS Surprise, and its crew to their limits to pursue a formidable French war vessel, the Acheron, around South America. The Captain and Doctor became good friends. In one humorous scene, the Captain plays with two small insects from the ship’s food supply. He points to the smaller one and asks the Doctor what it is. The Doctor didn’t understand the question, so the Captain answered and said, “It is the ‘lesser of two weevils.’”

I am sure you have heard people say how tired they are of voting for the lesser of two evils. Frankly, I am too. However, upon further review, that is our only option. There has only been one perfectly sinless and righteous man to have ever lived, and we killed Him. Thankfully, God raised Him from the dead and gave Him all authority. The rest of us are woefully flawed by our sinful nature. Only by the blood of the Crucified One can we find the remedy for our sins.

Jesus came to be a sin offering to forgive our sins through His faith. Jesus took on our trespasses and imputed His righteousness when we trusted Him with our lives and souls. Someone has said, “The only sin Jesus knew was ours, and the only righteousness we know is His.” Listen to these passages (from the NKJV):

- <sup>5</sup> **But to him who does not work but believes [or trusts] on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness, (Romans 4:5)**
- <sup>21</sup> **For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. (2 Corinthians 5:21)**
- <sup>9</sup> **and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; (Philippians 3:9)**

Many of our flawed founders understood our sinful nature and our need and desire to be righteous. According to **John Adams**, our **Constitution** is only for moral and religious [Christian] people. The only way we can be righteous is through Jesus. Yes, we can DO some righteous acts occasionally, but God calls these acts “filthy rags” (**Isaiah 64:6**), and they do not make us righteous on our own. Listen to a few of our ancestors.

**Elias Boudinot** was a President of **Congress**, Signer of the Peace Treaty to end America’s War for Independence, Framers of the Bill of Rights, and Director of the US Mint. He wrote a letter to his daughter regarding the Source of her (and our) salvation. He said:

You have been instructed from your childhood in the knowledge of your lost state by nature – the absolute necessity of a change of heart and an entire renovation of the soul to the image of Jesus Christ – of salvation through His meritorious righteousness only – and the indispensable necessity of personal holiness without which no man shall see the Lord [Hebrews 12:14]. You are well acquainted that the most perfect and consummate doctrinal knowledge is of no avail without it operates on and sincerely affects the heart, changes the practice, and totally influences the will – and that without the almighty power of the Spirit of God enlightening your mind, subduing your will, and continually drawing you to Himself, you can do nothing. . . . And may the God of your parents (for many generations past) seal instruction to your soul and lead you to Himself through the blood of His too greatly despised Son, Who notwithstanding, is still reclaiming the world to God through that blood, not imputing to them their sins. To Him be glory forever!

**Patrick Henry** was a Revolutionary General, Legislator, and Virginia Governor. He voted to ratify the US Constitution. Many have referred to him as the “Voice of Liberty.” He pointed out the necessity of righteousness for Americans. He said:

Righteousness alone can exalt [America] as a nation...Whoever thou art, remember this; and in thy sphere practice virtue thyself, and encourage it in others.

**John Witherspoon** signed the **Declaration of Independence**, ratified the **Constitution**, and was the President of Princeton. He declared the source of our righteousness and the necessity to pursue righteous lifestyles sincerely. Listen to his words.

[I]f you are not reconciled to God through Jesus Christ – if you are not clothed with the spotless robe of His righteousness – you must forever perish. ... [H]e is the best friend to American liberty who is the most sincere and active in promoting true and undefiled religion and who sets himself with the greatest firmness to bear down profanity and immorality of every kind. Whoever is an avowed enemy of God, I scruple not to call him an enemy to his country.

On March 5, 1774, on the occasion of the Boston Massacre, **John Hancock** gave an oration in Boston, which was printed in five pamphlet editions and widely circulated:

Some boast of being "friends to government": I am a friend to "righteous" government, to a government founded upon the principles of reason and justice....

Today, we vividly see our national struggle between righteous and unrighteous behavior. While we struggle individually with our sinful nature, so does our nation since it is composed of broken individuals. When people come to Christ, and He imputes His righteousness to individuals, the country becomes righteous. The Wise Man said:

- **Righteousness exalts a nation,  
But sin is a reproach to any people. Proverbs 14:34 (NKJV)**
- **When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice;  
But when a wicked man rules, the people groan. Proverbs 29:2 (NKJV)**

Thank God for sending His Son to remove our sins and credit His righteousness to us. Not only do we have “lesser evil” by following Him, but we also gain noble standing as His children. We advance God’s kingdom and rule on earth like is in heaven when we act virtuously.

God continually works through imperfect people who trust Him. In the OT, characters like Abram, Moses, Gideon, and David come to mind. Peter, James, John, and Paul do in the NT. He also worked through our Founders and Framers in establishing a country with a biblical worldview. If God worked in the people of the Bible and our American ancestors, He could work similarly through us – if we have the same kind of faith as they had. Let’s remember this astute admonition, “**Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding;**” (Proverbs 3:5, NKJV). Nothing less will do.

Let’s Keep The Light of Christ’s Righteousness in Us Burning!

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